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Alexander Wetmore

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SONG BIRD FANCIER:

COMPLETE TREATISH

ON

THE CLIPARET TRUE,

MOCKING BIRD,

AND OTHER DINDS OF SONG.

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INTRODUCTION.

A FONDNESS for birds, especially those rendered attractive by musical voices, or rich plumage, is almost universal, and few persons have the musical faculty so entirely undeveloped as not to love the melody of the feathered train. Singing birds have been a feature of every rural description, and have been portrayed in the haunts of every Armida, a poet has dreamed of. They are found in every habitation, in the palace and the hovel, and have called forth many of the most impassioned lyrics of the poets of all ages. Fond, however, as most persons are of birds, but little care has been bestowed on the health and comfort of the household minstrel, and but little attention has been bestowed on its wants and necessities.

This little volume is an attempt to supply this desideratum, and therefore, no apology is made for its appearance. Without any pretensions to literary display, it is intended to be a mere statement of facts, an exposition of the results of experience, which may, perhaps, be a guide to the uninitiated in the rearing and *education* of cage and singing birds.

Such a treatise has often been asked for, and in attempting to supply the want, but one difficulty has been experienced, that of maintaining brevity and conciseness; for, on such a subject, it is far easier to write a volume than a single sheet.

Without farther apology, this effort is submitted to the public, premising, that the defects are to be attributed to the author, the merits exclusively to the attractive subject.

THE CANARY BIRD.

ORIGIN.

THE Canary bird belongs to the tribe Fringilla, or Finch, and is chiefly found in a wild state among those Islands of the Atlantic whence it derives its name. Its prevailing color is vellow, though there is a second extensive variety with brown body and yellow eve-brows. Other varieties, or other sub-varieties, have been described to the number of thirty, arising, doubtless, from domestication, and admixture with other finches. It is about the size of a goldfinch. According to a late ornithologist, the second variety inhabits Africa, and it is said St. Helena, where it sings much better than the common Canary in cages in this country. It is also found at Palma, Fayal, Cape Verde, and Madeira, as well as at the Canaries.

The first introduction of the Canary-finch into Europe appears to have occurred in the fourteenth century, or soon after the discovery of the Canary Islands, when it is said to have been conveyed to the mother country by the Spanish colonists. However, we have

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no precise account of such an introduction until two centuries later. Bechstein, a German author, states that, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a vessel containing a number of these birds, destined for Leghorn, was wrecked on the coast of Italy, opposite to the island of Elba, where, on being set at liberty, they took refuge. The climate being favourable the birds increased, and soon became a favourite with the bird-fanciers of Italy. But, from the circumstance of none but male birds having been thus conveyed, it is to be concluded that the breed immediately became mixed, and the genuine characteristics of the original species blended with those of other tribes to which they had some affinity. Among these the Siskin is said by Buffon to be the only bird of which the male and female propagate equally with those of the male or female Canaries. Turner, who published a botanical work in 1560, indicates Spain as the source from whence England was then supplied with the Canary, and likewise with the food proper for its nourishment. He says, speaking of Phalaris Canariensis, (Canary grass, an annual grass, cultivated for its seed, which is the common food of the Canary,) "The first tyme that ever I saw thys herbe was in the citie of Come, where, as the chefe Phisiciane of the Citie, no less gentle than well learned, shewed vnto me, and my felow master Johan Walker. Afterwarde, I saw it in England taken for mil, for they that brought Canary burdes out of

Spayn, brought of the sede of Phalaris also, to fede them with."

The demand for them is now extensive; they are bred and reared with facility under almost any circumstances, and the beauty of their plumage, with the melody of their song, and the docility of their habits, have rendered them universal favorites. It is now thoroughly domesticated, and under cover, almost completely naturalized throughout the

whole of Europe.

In South Western Germany, and in the Tyrol, their propagation has been converted into a trade, and is carried on by means of both extensive and expensive apparatus. A large building is erected for them, with a square space at each end, and holes communicating with these spaces. In these outlets are planted such trees as the birds prefer; the bottom is strewed with sand and gravel, on which are thrown hemp seed, rape seed, chick weed, groundsel, &c., and such other food as the birds like. Throughout the inner compartment, which is kept dark, are placed brooms and young fir trees, for the birds to build in,-care being taken that the breeding birds are guarded from the intrusion of the rest.

Four Tyrolese annually take over to England about sixteen hundred of these birds; although they carry them on their backs nearly a thousand miles, and pay £20 for them originally, they can sell them at 5s. each.

The canary is not so difficult to rear as is

generally imagined, a good situation, however, is absolutely necessary. They cannot do without the warmth of the sun, but must be protected from the scorching glare of his beams. They should, therefore, always be placed near a window, with a southeast, a south, or southwestern exposure.

By cross-breeding and gradually accustoming the young to exposed situations, they will be brought to sing and thrive under almost any circumstances; but it must never be forgotten that the warmth of the sun is indispensable for successful incubation.

The original canary is now in the estimation of most breeders, below par. Mules, and among the indefinite varieties produced by cross-breeding, the *French breed* are now (and justly) the favorites.

VARIETIES.

THE LIZARD.

From various causes, it is difficult to identify the Fancy canary with the stock from which it originally sprung, but there appears some ground for the opinion, that the variety called the *Lizard*, may be looked upon as the nearest of kin.

The plumage of the Lizard is of a greenish bronze throughout, excepting the upper part of the head, which is covered by a patch of clear yellow. The back, which is marked with spangles in uniform stripes, correspond-

ing with the Trapezius, is an indication of the primitive state, the unsophisticated produce of nature being precise and geometrical.

This bird derives its name from the resemblance it bears to the color and marking of

the green lizard.

From the above evidences, and the similarity which seems to exist between this bird and the description of the greenfinch of the Canary Islands, it is very probable that, among the many varieties produced by cultivation, or by pairing with other tribes, that in this bird we may recognise the nearest approximation to the original species.

THE SPANGLED BACK.

The canary known as the *Spangled Back*, and formerly held in some estimation, will show the same process as the Lizard, but much broken up, an evident sign of degeneration: and is now only recognised as one of the many varieties produced by cross-breeding.

In Italy, the canary is paired with the citril-finch; in Germany, with the linnet, the greenfinch, the siskin, and the goldfinch. The grey, the yellow, the blackish, and chesnut, or cinnamon canary, are the principal varieties, and from their combination have been produced other varieties, according to Buffon, to the amount of twenty-nine; but this estimate is probably much under the fact.

The variety called Cinnamon canary, is

among the most rare.

THE JONQUIL.

The kinds chiefly recognised by amateurs, are the *Mealy birds*, and the *Jonquil*, and upon these all the resources of the breeder's judgment and experience have been exerted.

The Jonquil, as its name denotes, is of pure deep yellow, entirely free from any green tinge; the color is deeper on the cap,

over the eyes, and on the scapulars.

THE MEALY BIRD.

In the Mealy bird, the golden plumage of the back, breast, and head, appears to be frosted over, or powdered, through the small feathers, producing a white edge. In this and the above variety, a superiority of form (the result of high breeding) will easily be discovered.

THE ENGLISH FANCY.

The Fancy canary is of an orange color, except the wings and tail, which are black; the cap, or crown, is of a very rich orange, extending over the whole back part of the head. Depth, or richness of the orange color, is the grand object to be attended to, to produce the real Fancy; for the orange must not, by any means, be of the lemon cast.

THE FRENCH BREED.

Of late years the improvement in the breeding of canaries, has been very great.

In Europe, bird fanciers, by crossing with the long Belgium canary, have succeeded in producing a bird of beautiful form and symmetry, commonly called the French, or long breed. Those of clear yellow, mealy, and high mottled yellow and green, being esteemed the highest and most valuable. Others, by crossing with less judgment, have also produced a long bird, they are, however, easily detected, their bodies being thicker and legs shorter than those first mentioned.

They obtained the name of French birds from the fact, that most of these birds are imported from Havre, although they have derived their improvement from the Belgium birds. They command high prices, some having been sold as high as twenty-five dol-

lars per pair.

The criterion to distinguish the French breed from other large birds, is the tapering, long shape of their bodies and length of legs. These birds measure from six and a half to seven inches. Full one inch longer than the common canary; they are now fast superseding all other varieties in the estimation of amateurs and breeders.

In breeding the canary, great proficiency is shown in judicious pairing. A Mealy bird and a Jonquil being put together, the produce will not prove a mixture of the qualities of the parent birds, but the character of the one or of the other will appear distinct, and the produce of the nest will probably show specimens of each kind, Mealy and Jonquil. It

is a curious fact, that the Mealy bird may be distinguished at six days old, by the invariable appearance of fine feathers on the crest of the ilium, which are not developed by the Jonquil in any case.

The union of the Mealy and the Jonquil, is considered favorable to the production of pure birds; but if two strong birds are associated, the result will be an overcharge of

color in the offspring.

Another unfavorable consequence appertaining to the union of two Jonquils, appears when the union is continued, in a deterioration of the web of the feathers, which become frizzled and insufficient to cover the body, and the proper complement of tail and wing feathers will be wanting.

MATCHING.

Depth and richness of the orange color, is at present the prevailing taste in endeavoring to form a good match. In breeding fancy birds, a system so much practised in England, and on the Continent, and which is now rapidly extending in America, the grand requisite is a regular and well feathered hen, on which every thing else depends. But the qualities of the cock to which she is to be united, ought not to be neglected. He, to have a good progeny, even with the hen, ought to be bold, strong, and sprightly, with bright and sparkling eyes, erect carriage, symmetrical form, and sparrow-hawk-like posture on the perch. The most promising

marks, however, may lead astray, if no inquiry is made, and no knowledge is obtained of the family from which the pair have descended. Having obtained this information, and being certain that the stock is good, breeding may be safely attempted, and all turn out well, and far beyond expectation, even when all the points to be desired are not perceptible, for most of our most beautiful fancy varieties have arisen from accidental crossing, and when all the appearances were most unfavorable, and most unlikely, according to ordinary calculation, to lead to such a result.

Much must depend upon the skill, judgment, knowledge, and taste in the fanciers in canaries, as well as horses and dogs; but as particular rules, when not slavishly followed, under ignorance of the truth, that the exception is the keystone of the rule, are excellent auxiliaries to the general principle, we subjoin the following, by attending to which, the amateur, with a little patience and practice, may produce varieties, not only to his own delight, but to the envy of others.

- 1. A fine jonque cock, of a strong orange color, with much black in his feathers, should be matched with a fine, soft colored, mealy hen, with as little black as possible, except her tail, and wings, which must be regular and true.
- 2. For a strong mealy cock, a healthy jonque hen, with a fine soft feather, and regularly marked tail and wings, should be

adopted; and birds from the same nest should never be joined, as this will reduce and weaken the progeny to a certainty.

3. For breeding with, mealy hens are always the most successful, because by their union with a spangle marked cock, a more regular and finely marked cock is produced, than if the most beautifully spangled cock and hen had been the parents.

According to St. Pierre, contrast is the law of nature. At all events, with regard to canaries, this rule holds good, that like should never be matched with like. Here extremes meet, and by the union, excellent is the off-

spring.

Therefore, if one is weak, let it be matched with the one that is strong; if one is dark, let the other be fair; one spotted let the other be plain; if the one be crowned, let not even the shadow of a crown or coronet grace the brow of the other, and the excellence possessed by the one, which the other wants, will be found in higher perfection, in the progeny, than the single parent to which the happy quality belonged. In feathered tribes, more than in all others, it will be found that the greatest harmony springs from opposition.

4. To produce a full colored fine yellow bird, without spot or splash, a fine large mealy hen bred from a clean yellow stock, should be matched with a clean bred jonque cock. With every precaution, the most accurate attention, and the minutest observation, a spot or splash may appear in the

brood, unless it is previously distinctly ascertained that the parent birds came from a clear bred stock. If any of the progenitors have been spotted or splashed, the defect may have leapt over one generation, and it may

appear in the next.

5. Beautiful pie-colored birds are produced by taking a fine, clear jonque cock, matching him with a rich dark-colored green or gray hen. By such an union, the offspring will always be more or less pied; they have in general an exceedingly clear pipe, and are reckoned not only strong, but sweet songsters.

6. By matching a pair of strikingly marked birds, the strength of whose color is glaring, that strong black mixture, resembling the Lizard, is produced. The same result may also be obtained by matching a common strongly marked grey cock, with a splash-marked hen. Dark variegated birds may be got by a strong splashed common canary, with a fancy hen. Those that are all dark and sparrow-marked make fine singers. A strong grey or green canary, united with a mealy colored hen, must be got to produce the cinnamon color. Those of a lighter color, called Quackers, that are sometimes produced, are not much esteemed. By following up for two or three seasons consecutively, Mealies with Mealies, white or flaxen birds are produced, and by again crossing these with one with red eyes, another variety is obtained. To secure the real Fancy the male should be

matched with a fine orange colored mealy female, with cap, wings, and tail regular, and with a fine feather.

PAIRING.

The proper period for putting the birds together for the purpose of pairing, depends very much on the nature of the weather. In general the month of March is the best time, although in some seasons it may be done a month earlier, and in others it is desirable to wait a month longer. Some people make a boast of their attempt at very early pairing, but it is a very idle boast, as precocious breeding is never profitable, both injuring the constitution of the parents, and turning out in general an inferior brood. Young birds have been produced even before this period, but it is at a great sacrifice, and under disadvantages which will tell before the end of the season. They must be brought up, and at the early period of their existence, must subsist without that green food with which, at a later period, their parents and themselves could be so abundantly supplied. What is gained in time is lost in power, as in the summer months there will be less inclination and less capacity for incubation.

Common canaries that have spent the winter together, may indeed be put into the breeding cage and left to themselves; in these circumstances they seldom breed too early, but it is also true they seldom breed well.

It is better to separate them for a short

time. Their long familiarity is apt to produce indifference, but after a short separation, old acquaintance is soon renewed, and you may calculate almost to an hour when the hen will begin to lay.

Some breeders put the birds intended for breeding into a small cage, with only one upper perch, to make them familiar and sociable with each other. Others put them at first into the cage appointed for breeding; the former method is allowed to be the best.

During the time they are pairing, they should be fed high, by giving them sparingly every morning a little chopped egg and bread, mixed with a little maw seed and some bruised hemp. As soon as they become sociable, feed each other, and sleep on the perch close together, then the breeding cage for their reception may be prepared.

It is needful to remark, some birds at first pairing will fight very much, and the hen strives for the mastership, but in most cases, without success. If they fight too much, and will not come to any reconciliation in the course of one month's trial, it will be best to

part them and try another hen.

These birds have their sympathies and antipathies, which nothing can subdue. The sympathy of a male is shown by putting him alone in an aviary where are many females; in a few hours he will make choice of one, and will not cease for an instant to show his attachment, by feeding her. Nay, he will even choose a female without seeing

her; it is sufficient that he should hear her cry, and he will not cease to call her. The same observation is also applicable to the female.

In some cases, however, all these sources of sympathy seem to be dried up within them, and an immediate antipathy, which no endearment nor fond caress can overcome, appears to have usurped its place. By no contrivance can such canaries be brought to pair. More cocks than hens appear thus constituted, and these cocks are generally found to be the best singers.

Either cock or hen will, in general circumstances, very readily take up with another mate. It is also evident that their attachment is not confined to those of their own kind, as the beautiful variety of mules which has sprung from the canary and other tribes of

finches abundantly testifies.

The birds having at length been successfully paired, all now depends upon season, situation, and cage.

SEASON.

With regard to the season, we have already said it is better to be too early than too late. If March has been cold, and no favorable change takes place in April, they should be kept back as long as possible, as in such a season the hen is apt to become egg-bound, or lay soft eggs: in one case her life is endangered; in the other, her strength is wasted in vain.

SITUATION.

The situation is a matter of very considerable importance. To this we have before alluded, but we must repeat more particularly that it should if possible be exposed to the sloping beams of the morning sun, and protected from its meridian rays. If the sun does not leave the situation before noon, it is easy to cast the cage into shadow by a screen at a distance from it. Pulling down the window blinds, or placing chicken-weed on the top of the cage, to overhang the sides in festoons, is a simple process.

When the weather is close or sultry, the window may be opened early, and when hot, left open all day; but take care of cats.

For many reasons the doors should be shut, draughts of air being as pernicious to the eggs as feline intruders are to the birds.

As the best situation to gain the morning sun, and escape the north-easterly gales, is S. by E., S. S. E., S. E. by S., or S. E., and not direct east, it is frequently cool from these points even in the month of May—precautions must be taken accordingly; but an excess of heat is as prejudicial as cold. Too much warmth and want of air is apt to give the hen the sweating sickness while sitting, and to render the young weak and tender.

The room into which the pair are placed should never require a fire; hence an additional reason for not beginning too early; it should neither be damp, dark, nor close, but dry, large, light, and airy. A cheerful situation and the morning sun, give spirit, warmth, and animation to the birds. If draughts of air can be prevented, and cats excluded, during summer, the window should be thrown completely open all day. If a good wire gauze can be made to project from the window, the birds can easily be placed under it, where they will get the air and enjoy the warmth without the scorching heat of the sun.

The place for the birds to breed in, having been chosen, the next consideration is the best kind of cage to hang up for their reception. If an old one is adopted, it ought to be thoroughly washed, scrubbed, rubbed, cleaned, and dried. After their long cessation from use, vermin, of various sorts, are apt to lodge in the crevices, which, if not utterly exterminated, will grieve the heart

both of bird and breeder.

The cage should be placed so as to admit of a constant view of the birds, and an easy access, without disturbing them. They should not be hung, unless for disagreeable reasons, and in disadvantageous circumstances, out of reach, requiring to be lifted or drawn down to us, or to take stools or steps to get to them. They should at least be on a level with the line of vision. This familiarizes the birds with their keeper, makes him better acquainted with them, he can see at a glance what is going on, they become accustomed to any little motion or commotion that may be going on around, they will be less liable

to be frightened and flustered by the appearance of danger, and in every respect, the breeding cage will become a more manage-

able commodity than it generally is.

Of the structure of the cage, we shall afterwards take notice, but one for breeding should have two nest boxes at one end, that birds may have their choice, always having the perches clean, and as stout as their claws can grasp and stand firm upon, likewise clean claws, without lumps of dirt on them; for by having a steady, full sized perch, the birds hold fast, and have no trouble, or fear of falling, or slipping, or turning round on the perch, which often produces addled eggs.

Some breeders pair a strong healthy male with two females, which in some cases does pretty well, provided that proper attention is paid to them. When two hens are intended to be put up with one male, they should be selected for that purpose at the end of harvest, and kept in one cage during winter, in order to make them familiar with each other. It will not do to put two hens with a male in one cage, without there being a temporary board in the middle, to prevent the hens from seeing each other while they are hatching, or they will fly off their nests at each other, and fight like two little termagants, and in the scuffle the eggs, and consequently, the hopes of the breeder, may be upset. But to prevent such vexations, let the breeder have two cages, and put up only one hen at a time, and after she has done laying, take the

male out, and put him up with the other hen, and so on to the end of the season.

Sprinkle plenty of gravel or sea-sand at the bottom of your cage, and hang up in it a lump of good old mortar, the nibbling and biting of which keeps the birds in good health. As soon as you have put your birds up, keep feeding them high, and add a little moist sugar to the bread and egg, until they have laid an egg or two; the moist sugar opening the hens' bodies, and preventing them being egg-bound. Be sure that the bread and egg are fresh every day, and it is best to feed them over night, so that they find it early and fresh at break of day. Let the greens be always fresh, such as water cresses, radish tops, cos lettuce, cabbage lettuce, small sallad, as cresses, mustard, &c., all young and green. I do not recommend chickweed, nor groundsell, nor plantain, till it is ripe and full of seeds.

BREEDING.

The Canary is a most prolific bird, so much so, that in the great majority of instances the propensity requires to be restrained rather than encouraged. They will have from two to five nests in the year; and some birds have been known to bring up safely and successfully, eight broods in one season. But it is a cruel and imprudent experiment to make; they should not be allowed to breed more than twice, or at the most, three times a year. If a hen is prolific one season, she will be the

reverse the next, or she may be completely destroyed by the effort. One that has two or three nests and four or five eggs each time, must be a mother sufficiently valuable, and to overtax her is both unwise and unsafe.

The period for incubation lasts fourteen days, but in very warm weather, the process may be completed in thirteen days. Between seven and nine in the morning is their regular time of laying, and for the purpose of preventing waste of time, by permitting the hen to sit on unfecundated eggs, some breeders are in the habit of taking the eggs out when eight days old, and holding them between their finger and thumb before a strong light, when it is ascertained that those which are transparent are unimpregnated, and therefore, useless, but the good ones are dark and thick.

If they are all bad, they should be thrown away; the nest should be taken out, shaken and cleaned, and an inducement, and an opportunity afforded the hen to lay again, which she will generally do in a very short time.

After laying two or three eggs, some hens will desert them, and it is found upon examination, that these eggs are in general bad; nature, by some mysterious process, giving the bird an instinctive hint, that to brood over them longer, would be labor lost. These, therefore, should be immediately broken, and the hen allowed to go to nest again.

It is recommended by some breeders, as soon as the Canary has laid, to take out the egg every morning and substitute an ivory one; when the hen has done laying, take the ivory eggs away, and set her upon the whole of her own. Naturalists say that it gives the hen more satisfaction to see them come successively one after the other; but experience has shown us that it is the better way to substitute the ivory egg, and daily take away the laid one, till she lays her complement; and also to examine the eggs after the hen has been sitting eight days upon them, to save time and useless fatigue to the mother; let all this, however, be done with as little annoyance as possible.

Some females in breeding are very careless mothers, a fault which is not very easily done away with. Therefore, if they cannot be brought to do any thrift the first season, avoid

another season's trial.

Others will eat their eggs, as will sometimes also the male. The best way to prevent this, is to feed the bird very early every morning with bread and egg, or the last thing at night for the morning, for the hen no sooner lays her egg than she leaves the nest, and flies round the cage in search of food, which if she does not find, and that too in some delicate or dainty form, she returns to the nest in a rage, and seems to break the eggs out of pure spite, more than from desire to eat them.

As another precaution when the hen is addicted to this vice, the usual period for the

laying of Canaries should be carefully watched, and as soon as she has laid it, the egg she has laid should be removed and the ivory ball substituted, and if this be done for four or five mornings, all the eggs may be returned, when there is a great chance of her settling down and sitting the requisite time.

When the male eats the eggs, it is a sign of strength. Such males should have two

hens.

It will frequently happen with young mothers, that the first time of hatching they are so careful and anxious for the eggs that are not hatched, as not to leave their nest to feed the young that are hatched, and the consequence is, that the young birds are starved.

The best preventative of this evil is to attend to the day they will be hatched, by keeping a register of the time when they were laid and set. The most enticing food, such as bread and egg, fresh greens, &c., should be placed before them, to remind them of the duty of feeding their young. If the hen is not observed feeding her young, or carrying food to them, she should be stirred out of the nest, to let her see that there is enough to satisfy her wants. If this is done three or four times the first day, by feeding as she goes out, and seeing her young ones gape as she comes in, she will soon be brought to feed them, and the cock will soon follow her example.

With every care to set the hen exactly to a day, it will happen that all the eggs are not chipped at the same time; when this contingence takes place, every effort must be made to allure them to their duty, as we can scarcely conceive it within the range of mere instinct to inform them that there is ever laid upon them a double obligation. If there is any suspicion that either nest or eggs are damaged, the hen may be driven off to ascertain the fact. On this account it is of importance that the eggs should be so placed that you may come at the birds with ease to observe their actions, without annoying them.

If a cock or hen should die, early in the breeding season, and it is worth while, having time on hand, you must choose a mate as near as possible in color, age, and size, to the deceased; for there is always more sympathy with those that resemble their own choice.

When it is necessary to bring the young up by hand, some stale, well baked bread should be crumbled very fine and mixed with crushed rape seed, which has been boiled, and afterwards washed with fresh water to remove its acrimony; the whole is made into a paste, by the addition of a little yolk of egg and water. The most convenient way to give it to the young birds is on a quill cut like a spoon. Each nursling requires for a meal four beaks full, well piled upon the quill; they should be fed very early in the morning, and every two hours during the day.

As soon as the young are hatched, a small cup is placed beside the usual feeding trough, which contains half of an egg, boiled hard and grated very fine, with a piece of stale bread rubbed fine and soaked with fresh milk; another cup should contain rape seed, prepared as above directed.

The young should be placed in separate cages in about four weeks, but should still be fed with the same paste, as well as seeds.

The technical terms and names given to young birds in general are a Nestling, or one from the nest; a Pusher, a young bird that is taken three or four days after he has left his nest; a Brancher is a bird full grown,

but has his nestling feathers.

As for cleanliness, air, and exercise, when the birds have brought up a nest of young ones, watch the opportunity to clean out the nest box, and if this be very dirty, throw away the dirt and nest. Then let the birds have plenty of clean materials, and you will soon see them build another nest in one day. Neglect of the main point, cleanliness, which promotes health, and keeps away the red mites, causes many breeders much trouble, vexation, and disappointment.

When the breeding season is over, and the birds all put into the cages, let them not be fed with much green food; indeed, at no time give much, as it is better to give none at all, than too much. Beginners cannot be cautioned enough regarding this, as many hundreds of canaries die every year, from no other cause than being surfeited with green

meat.

MULE BREEDING.

Some naturalists are of opinion that the hybrid of the Canary forms an exception, and instead of being barren is fruitful, and can propagate its kind. Baron Cuvier, in his "Animal Kingdom," states this doctrine, but only to disprove it, as contrary to an established law of nature, and all observations attest it to be notoriously contrary to the fact. Eggs will be laid and all the duties of mother performed, but here the matter ends; and this no more implies the re-productive power of the Canary mule, than the laying and setting of the domestic fowl without a cock. Although no posterity follows, the first operation is sufficiently interesting to make the subject of mule breeding worthy of attention.

There are various kinds of cross breeding, or what is termed mule breeding; that is, an union with other country finches, or small hard billed birds, such as the Venturon, the Cini, or Serin, the Aberdevine, the English Goldfinch, Greenfinch, Chaffinch, Linnet, Hedge Sparrow, Yellow Hammer, and Bullfinch, united with the cock and hen Canaries, which require some notice and attention.

Of all these crosses, none is so common in this country, or so successful, as that of the hen Canary and cock Goldfinch; from which on account of the variety of the male's plumage, the young are sometimes extremely beautiful. The above and many others, may be paired with the Canaries, but it is neces-

sary to observe the following rules when

vou pair them.

They should be taken young and brought up by hand, or under a Canary hen, and fed on rape and canary-mostly canary seed; as otherwise they will be found very difficult to pair. Of hemp seed they are so fond as to eat to excess, which is very hurtful in the breeding time, and ultimately rots them, changing the brightness and color of their plumage to brown.

Before you pair the Goldfinch, cut off the tip of his beak about the thickness of a sixpence, with sharp scissors; as of all birds, this has the most pointed beak. There may be two or three drops of blood, but a little piece of moist sugar will cure it. This will prevent him from flying at the hen Canary, many of which are often killed by a Goldfinch, and from hurting the young ones when feeding them; otherwise he is apt to pierce their little throats with his sharp beak, and kill them.

A Goldfinch hen put up with a Canary, ought to be two years old, as they seldom lay the first year in a cage; a fact which is but little known, and prevents many who are disappointed the first year, from venturing upon a second trial.

The wild birds meant to breed or cross with, should be kept in a fly with Canaries, so that they may choose the hen from amongst a number, for they are difficult in their choice sometimes. Fresh caught birds must also be

tamed by being hung very low, and kept in a room where you constantly live, that they

may become familiar.

Generally the hen Canary is paired with the cock goldfinch, or linnet; but I prefer breeding from a cock Canary with the hen goldfinch, or linnet; as the young are usually handsomer, following the color of the cock, and inheriting his song. The young differ very much in beauty; some are very plain, resembling the wild bird, while others are very beautifully marked, or pied, and some few are perfectly white, these two latter descriptions fetch an exorbitant price. The linnet mules are the best for song, but generally plain in their plumage.

It is very difficult to induce a Canary to pair with a bullfinch, as he, in the pairing time, opens his mouth so wide as to frighten her; but it has been accomplished where they have been kept a considerable time

together. .

To breed fine mules, take a cock Canary, two years old, of rich color, which has never been paired; for if they had been previously paired with a Canary, they will not readily match with any other bird, and particularly with a bird of a different color. The hen goldfinch should have been brought up by hand, or from the nest; or should at any rate, have been taken some time, so that she may be used to live on rape and canary, and with hardly any hemp, or now and then a little, for reasons before mentioned. If you

can procure it, you will find a small quantity of thistle seed to be of great service, which is the proper food for young goldfinches at first, and they are very partial to it. Your goldfinch and canary should be put in a small cage immediately, or as long as possible before the breeding season, that they may be accustomed to each other before they pair. From birds selected as thus directed, you may expect fine mules, with various and elegant plumage, the richness of the cock and the beautiful colors of the hen, causing them to be handsomely marked beyond description. Sometimes this will be the case with a cock goldfinch and a canary hen, but more frequently they are much plainer and less valuable.

Young mules ought always to be put under old canaries of fine song, that they may take their song, which is far preferable to their natural notes. If you have cock linnets, take from the nest as soon as they can feed themselves, place them under these old canaries, and they will in six months, sing so loud and well that you can scarcely distinguish your linnet from your Canary.

There is a dangerous complaint to which the goldfinch is subject, called epilepsy, or falling sickness; when he is seized with it, he flies about very violently, and falls on his back. With a pair of sharp scissors, cut off the ends of his hinder claws; sometimes two or three drops of blood may follow; in that case, wash his feet with white wine, and give him two or three drops on sugar. This is a medicine equally quick and efficacious; and unless it be resorted to, nine cases out of

ten will end fatally.

One of the most pleasing variety of mules is produced by the cock Averdivine, with a hen canary. The young are plain in plumage, but very harmonious songsters, and easily become so familiar as to perch on your finger

and sing at command.

Much experience, attention to nature, and observation, are required in cross, or mule breeding, to domesticate and break in the birds to the Canary food, and to know their age. For example, linnets should not be turned up to breed till two years old, when crossed with the Canary. A goldfinch hen ought to be two years old, as she seldom lays eggs the first year in a cage. And, observe nature in putting your birds up to breed: that is, to fall in about their own natural time, be the bird whatever it may. You must not expect mule, or cross breeding, to be ever prolific; the Aberdivine and Serin finches, are the most prolific, the goldfinch next, and the linnet seldom more than one nest in a season.

In the finch tribe it may be noticed there are two distinct and separate species; the one hard-billed, living upon seed, the other soft-billed, living on flesh, soft food, and insects. Any of the hard-billed birds may be paired with the Canary, the others will not unite. Mule breeding will do best in the

country, as good air and a lively situation is essential for breeding with any thing like success. Those who wish to amuse themselves with mule breeding, must not feel disappointed in losing for a season or two. It is always with the greatest difficulty that any thing is produced from the greenfinch, bull-

finch, chaffinch, or yellow-hammer.

This is the whole that is deemed necessary to advance on this subject. A great deal more might have been said, but as it will require a little experience to become acquainted with the general method of mule breeding, which cannot be got by any thing we could say, we therefore, leave that part to the reader, confident that a little attention and observation will overcome any difficulties to which he may be exposed.

FEEDING.

The seed that now goes universally by its own name, is the common food of the Canary, and on it alone it thrives sufficiently, especially when kept single as the "pet of the parlor," and merely for the purposes of song; but when intended for breeding and to produce fancy varieties, something more is required. High feeding is essential to them from the first moment they are set to pair, till the time they are separated, and this is generally composed of animal food and hard boiled egg, mixed with seed. The egg should always be fresh, and if possible, newly laid.

The egg when boiled hard, should be grated and mixed with dry, stale grated bread, or roll, in quantity proportionally greater than the egg itself. A little finely pulverized white sugar, with some maw seed, is an excellent addition, and with these they will rear up their young healthy and well.

As a general food, we find Canaries thrive remarkably well when fed on a mixture of Canary, hemp, millet, and rape seed, which is now generally known under the name of mixed bird seed. They should also be supplied with the cuttle fish bone, which can be placed between the wires of the cage.

All stale food, and refuse of every kind, should be daily removed, and if this is not attended to, gripes and hoarseness in the young birds will be the consequence—evils

more easily prevented than removed.

Night is better than morning for supplying the more substantial food, as at the peep of dawn they will find their repast fresh, clean, and tidy, of which they will partake with a keener relish than after their appetite has been clogged with garbage. In the morning, greens, water cresses, radish tops, cabbage lettuce should be given, fresh and sparingly; and if chick-weed is given, let it be ripe, and not much at a time.

Some persons keep their birds entirely on rape seed; but it is too relaxing, and ultimately kills them. Canaries should always be allowed plenty of clean water and gravelly soil. Besides water for drinking, they should be allowed twice a week some water to wash themselves; a saucer is the best vessel for hold-

ing it.

The female, while hatching, should not get water to wash herself, as that might retard the process of incubation, and even run a

chance of rotting the eggs.

After pairing the birds, it will do very well to put a lump of old mortar in the cage for the hen to pick at, as it will help in the formation of the shell of her eggs.

CAGES.

The forms of cages deemed suitable for finches, are as various as the fancies of the purchasers, or the tastes of the wire workers. Some contend for their being small, while others cannot have them large enough, the former only regarding the singing; the latter, air and exercise. For their respective objects, each has its advantages. The mere shape is altogether a matter of taste, for it does not signify much, unless for breeding, when an oblong is evidently the only proper form.

For this purpose, the kind now most in use are about 18 inches by 11, and 12 in height; the perches are placed four inches and a half from the ends of the cage, to keep the tails clear, which will allow 7 inches of a leap, which is long enough. The nest box is placed on the outside, at the end of the cage, and is not a fixture, but can be removed at any time. Those cages with two perches

below and one above, should not be used, as they tend to diminish the stately appearance of the birds; but those with only two perches on a level, give birds by far the best shape.

The cage should be thickly and firmly wired to prevent, as much as possible, the mischief frequently done by mice, who often eat the eggs, and even the young ones. If birds are attacked by a cat, which also happens, they have the best chance of escaping who are in a thickly wired cage; provided it be firmly fixed up. The wire should always be of iron, as the Canaries are ever nibbling at it; brass wires get covered with verdigris which is fatal to birds. It is recommended to have cages painted, either inside or out, with common oil paint; they may be varnished on the outside. White paint should never be used for the inside, as the reflection of white weakens the sight; light blue or green should be used. All cages should have a large door, which is very convenient for many purposes.

In purchasing an old cage, or putting up breeding cages which may have been out of use for some time, see that they are not beset with red mites, like bugs in old furniture; and that there are no old looking, dry, musty places about the hinges, doors or nest boxes. Wash them well with strong yellow soapsuds and pearl ashes; and when dry, they may be washed over with the following lotion:—Spirits of turpentine and spirits of wine, equal parts; in which you dissolve some camphor and soda, about the size of a

scarlet bean; mix this well together, and keep it in a bottle, closely corked, for use; before using it, shake it up well, and dip into it a small brush, with which wash over the cage, and let it dry for a day or two in any airy place to carry off the smell. This destroys all the red mites and other vermin that lurk in the crevices, and which in the heat of summer pour forth their hosts to annoy the birds both old and young. Soak the water glasses and fountains in pearl ash water for a few minutes, to cleanse them from green and scurf, and rinse them well.

BUILDING

The materials used and recommended for building, are numerous and varied, but the principal points to be attended to are warmth and cleanliness. Of whatever stuff the nest is composed it should always be new. The materials of the old nest must be unscrupulously rejected, unless it is wished to colonize the new one with red mites, and all sorts of vermin. All old fabrics, indeed are bad—as from them the woolly surface has been much rubbed off, and little but the cold fibre left behind.

The wooden cup, box, or basket, should have put into it a little fine, fresh, clean elk's hair, mixed with soft dried moss, and some white wool, neatly disposed, so as to give as little trouble as possible to the bird in forming it into the shape of a nest.

Previous to doing so, we ourselves have often successfully—although we know not whether it has been sanctioned or practised by others—rubbed the inside of the nest box with strong warm glue, and while in a liquid state allowed it to retain as much wool as could be gently dipped upon it while the roll was instantly lifted up. This forms a fixed and warm foundation. We have also lined our boxes with undressed fur, and have found that although the materials afterwards placed upon it were scanty, the nest was warm enough for successful incubation.

Sometimes before the young are ready to quit one nest, the hen will feel a desire to build another. This she will sometimes do, even on the top of her young, and thus smo-

ther them.

SEX.

It is not at all times easy to distinguish between the cock and hen. By an experienced fancier, it can be done indeed at a glance, and some are even able to point out the cocks almost as soon as they are hatched.

Both the size and the singing are pretty good distinguishing marks between male and female, but sometimes even these are not sufficient, as many a gigantic hen has been found; and as there have been crowing hens in the barn-yard, they have not been altogether banished from the Canary cage.

Some females, by their musical attempts,

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have deceived the unskilful, and sometimes even the knowing ones have been taken in, and have remained sceptical till the reputed gentleman began to lay eggs. This is the most conclusive test of all. A hen may try to sing, but no cock, as far as we know, has

ever attempted to lay eggs.

But the sure way to distinguish the female's jabbering from the legitimate song of the male is, that though a male may sing ever so indifferently, every time he strikes a note, the passage of his throat will heave with a pulsive motion, and continue so all the time he is singing; but let the female sing ever so well, this motion is never observed in her throat as in the male's.

Another way to distinguish the male from the female is, the color above the bill, under the throat, and the pinion of the wings is of brighter hue in the male; for let the birds be of what shade of color they may, the male will always have a brighter yellow on the above mentioned places, which are always

pale and languid in the female.

But what is a good criterion as any other, is the largeness, vigor, and majestic carriage of the male, which he always shows, if in good health, by stretching himself out to his utmost extent. The female is generally smaller and shorter, especially from the legs to the vent, and of a more sudden roundness, required by nature for containing and laying her eggs; the male in that part is slim and long, ending in a small point under the tail.

SINGING.

No certain rules can be laid down with regard to the singing of the Canary, by which all will be satisfactorily guided. All birds, indeed, are agreeable in their different songs; the sky-lark for his vast compass of natural notes; the linnet, for his docility in imitating regular music, and taking the wood-lark's song; and the goldfinch for his agreeableness,

and attachment to his house.

Canaries with long, straight, and tapering bodies, are found, by observation, to be the finest in song, while, on the contrary, short, thick-set cocks are found to be harsh and abrupt in their notes, and to be deficient in the power of their lungs. When it is desired to make young Canaries good songsters, they should if possible, be put under the nightingale or tit-lark for tuition. The German method, but we beg to doubt its propriety, to produce fine songsters, is to cover the cage all day, and expose the birds in the evening to a strong light, when by making any noise, they are induced to sing.

It is better to place two or three birds to-

gether, as they will vie with each other.

The Canary, when young, is easily taught, by means of a flageolet or bird organ, to retain and sing entire tunes. From experience, we would recommend the following method, as best calculated to teach them an air or tune:—Ten or twelve days after you observe your bird to feed himself, take him from all your other birds, and put him in a

cage; or sooner than twelve days if you perceive an attempt to record his natural song. Let his cage be covered with a thin linen cloth for eight days, and placed in a room away from all the other birds, so that he may hear no singing. Then take the flageolet or bird organ, which must not be too harsh or shrill, as the bird will not fail to follow in the same key; which if too shrill will cause so great an exertion of his lungs, that most probably, (if he be a good and mettlesome bird,) he will strain himself to such a degree as to occasion his death.

At the expiration of fifteen days, you must change the thin linen cloth which covers him, for a thick green, or red serge; and he must remain covered in this way until he is perfect

in the air you wish him to learn.

As to the number of airs, it is better, in our opinion, to have him learn a single good one, than to teach him two or three, as he is apt to mix and confound them. There are some canaries, indeed, that learn much quicker than others; some will be perfect in two months, while others are six; but a fair degree of patience is necessary to the master to enable him to accomplish so desirable an end; without it nothing is to be done, and with it he may render his bird exceedingly valuable.

The organ ought to be very mellow and sweet in its tones; for if harsh, it will have a very bad effect, the bird, as before observed, copying with great exactness, even

your instrument's faults.

Five or six lessons a day will be sufficient; more will only fatigue the bird. They may be divided in the following manner: two lessons in the morning, the earlier the better, one or two in the middle of the day, and two in the afternoon or evening. At each lesson the tune must be played eight or nine times over, and care must be taken to play it through.

You must not attempt to teach two in the same room unless they are in the same cage; and as soon as you have finished, take one where he cannot hear the other, as they soon begin to practise what they have heard, and

will lead each other into error.

In short, the whole bringing up a bird to sing well, depends entirely upon visiting him early, and furnishing him the last thing before you leave him, with what he is to eat for the day. He should be supplied daily with fresh water in his fountain, and small gravel at the bottom of his cage; but short allowance in eating is absolutely necessary to make him a good songster.

The mealy, splashed, or green birds, are better and stronger than the jonquil, and consequently, best adapted to a mode of teaching them, which requires some degree of severity.

Many Canaries are sullen, unsociable, and untractable; appearing thoughtful, sad, and melancholy, singing seldom, and their song short and inharmonious. These birds, if not put under high spirited, courageous old birds, of strong song, are worth but little. Give

them, however, the advantage of hearing birds of fine mettle, and they will, by degrees, be encouraged to imitate them, and their temper will be very much improved.

DISEASES.

If proper care is taken, the Canary is subject to few diseases. Those that do arise, may be all traced to carelessness and inattention. If duly fed, their cages regularly cleaned and kept in good air, it is seldom that the birds are found in bad health. In a state of nature they are liable to many misfortunes, but what their diseases are, the records of no ornothological hospital can tell. In a state of domestication their health can be better observed and more carefully attended to, and some hints can be given how it may be preserved or restored.

Colds are the most general complaint, and they are almost all owing to carelessness. How frequently are birds hung up close to the top corner of a window, with the sash down about one foot, and a draught of air running through, or by the cage, fit to turn a small wind-mill. Thus they are frequently exposed for several hours late in the evening, when going to roost, without any consideration whether the air be damp, cold, or dry. In this manner many a fine bird is endangered, if not killed, by taking cold, which often proves incurable.

When birds are in good health, and lively,

their feathers will appear and feel sleek and smooth, adhering close to their bodies.— Whenever you perceive the reverse of this, and the birds are sitting dull and bunchy,

rely on it, something is out of order.

Therefore, first consider the season, or time of the year; if moulting is approaching, or if any thing has worried, or frightened the bird; if he has been hung up in a draught of air, and taken cold; if he is suffering from neither of these causes, see if he can get at his water and seed, and that both are sweet. Good seed always appears clear and glossy, and feels dry and hard; if there is no fault here, examine his body, blow up the feathers of his belly, see if his bowels look swelled, or inflamed, and if so, it is symptomatic of a surfeit.

If he appears lean, and out of condition, look closely for vermin about his body, and examine well his cage for those small red mites, which assail him at night when going to roost, and frequently are the cause of his picking and plucking himself so much by day. Likewise, such is the susceptibility of the Canary finch, through delicate breeding, above all other features, that frequently you will cause him to begin to moult, if the place, or room, should be too close, or warm, compared with what he has been accustomed to; and a change from a warm room to a cold one, will make him bunchy and dull, and stop his singing.

In purchasing a bird, careful inquiry should

be made as to the quarter from which he came, and the temperature to which he was accustomed. It need not surprise any one, if he should appear dull and sulky, when removed from light and cheerful company, to a dull and lone situation; but a short time will in general restore him to his wonted spirits.

Cleanliness, good seed, and fresh water, frequently renewed, are all that are required

for a bird in good health.

Green food is not absolutely indispensable for a bird kept merely for song. It, however, may always be given to them as a luxury, and in spring it operates as a medicine. It cleanses the bowels, cools and purifies the blood, and a leaf of lettuce, or a sprig of water-cress, may be at once useful and ornamental on the top of the cage. A plentiful supply of green food should be allowed them in the breeding season, but unless chick-weed is quite ripe, it does them more harm than good. A stick of good, ripe, seedy plantain is an excellent thing for them in autumn, but it should not be given them if green, and all the undergrown part should be thrown away.

SURFEIT.

Surfeit is the most serious malady with which canaries are affected. It is principally occasioned either by cold or improper diet. It is frequently to be met with in a whole nest, owing to the young ones having been furnished with bad food, such as a bad egg chopped up, or grated, dead stale greens, left at the bottom of the cage, overgrown, coarse, unblown chick-weed, and putrid, or green

water, in the fountains.

There are two symptoms of this distemper, exhibited as arising either from cold or overfeeding; in the first case, if, when blowing up the feathers of the belly, it appears swelled, transparent, and full of little red veins, together with the bowels sinking down to its extreme parts, it may be inferred that the bird is in a bad state. In this case, the state of the bowels should be carefully attended to: if they are not loose, some grits should be given in the seed, and a blade of saffron in the water, or as much magnesia as will cover a sixpence, dissolved in the water, for two or three mornings, and a little bread and milk, with a sprinkling of maw-seed upon it. If he should be very relaxed, give him, instead of grits, or oat-meal, a little bruised hemp seed and maw-seed, which are more binding, and a little dried sponge biscuit, soaked in white wine.

When the surfeit seizes your birds in the

nest, it is then incurable.

This evil may be prevented by a little attention; always considering, that as cage birds have not miles to fly in search of their food, they have not that air and exercise to carry off the foul humors which over-feeding, carelessness, and colds produce; they are

generally young birds that are affected in this manner.

In birds one, two, or three years old, surfeit is sometimes also produced by too much grass feeding, greens out of season, bad water, and want of gravel at the bottom of the cage. At this age, the disease comes out in scabs, and humors, about the head, bill, and eyes, and the running of the humor is so sharp and hot, that it will take the feathers off wherever it spreads over their bodies, and even affect the eyes to blindness.

To cure and stop this, put the bird immediately upon a cooling, purging diet; take away the Canary seed, and let him have only rape seed, with some grits bruised among it, which will cool and scour him out. Afterwards anoint the head, or the parts where the feathers have come off, with fresh, good hog's lard, or the oil of sweet almonds, two or three times before roosting time.

This treatment will check the disorder.

Keep the bird upon this diet until he is purged well, which will make him thin and lean; and when you have conquered the malady, return to the rape and canary seed mixed; but such is the virulence of the disease, if it attacks the eyes, or settles there, in most cases, the sight cannot be saved. Some persons recommend a strong solution of salt and water to wash the head and parts where the feathers have come off. After you have cured your birds, they will look rough and most miserable in feather, till they have passed the moulting season.

THE HUSK.

The husk is produced by cold. It is similar in birds to a dry, husky cough, constantly troubling them, and when once caught is not easily cured; therefore, strict attention, and that immediately, is necessary.

Keep the birds in a warm room, and give them some linseed with their rape and canary, for some time, and for a few mornings, a small quantity of boiled milk and bread, with

maw-seed sprinkled over it.

Fresh water every day is indispensable, and a little rock caudy dissolved in it, or a piece of sponge biscuit soaked in white, or canary wine, is found to have the happiest effects. These means with a little care and attention, are all that can be employed with any prospect of successful result.

In buying birds, care should be taken that they are not tainted with this malady; and in bringing them home, they should not be hung up where they are exposed to any draught of air; in such a situation, it is very

apt to be brought on.

EXCESSIVE PERSPIRATION.

Excessive perspiration is a disease that arises from various causes, of which weakness is the principal. It is an almost insuperable concomitant if the hen has been weakly bred; but it often arises from the close and confined situation of the breeding cage, over-

heat, a warm season, anxiety and excessive care, with too close sitting upon the eggs, or young; all have a tendency to bring it on.

If it arises from the latter cause, little can be done, as in attempting to remedy one evil another may be created. In using endeavors to induce her to leave her nest, she may

be led to forsake her young.

Both time and policy are required in the invention and employment of many little artifices, to wile her away from her pleasing but perilous task. In her situation, air and exercise are indispensable requisites, and to entice her off her nest, the cock should be removed for a few days, and hung up in her sight at a short distance; she should be supplied with abundance of green food, to tempt her off the young ones for the purpose of feeding them; and in consequence she will have the privilege of air and exercise in the performance of her duty.

When she appears duly occupied with maternal cares, her mate may be restored; and even although she should not, he must be restored for the sake of feeding the young.

Weakness may at once be inferred, when it is exhibited by the symptoms of damp and ruffled feathers before the hen has had eggs or young ones. It is not advisable to breed with birds of this kind. To cure this malady, in these circumstances, the bird is sometimes washed with a solution of salt and water for several mornings, the breeding cage is removed to a more airy situation, all draughts

of air are again avoided, and a few drops of sherry are at other times sprinkled over them in the morning; after which they are set in the sun to dry.

THE PIP.

It is doubted much whether any such thing as the pip exists, from the wren to the goose. A small projection on the rump is found, which some writers tell us nature has given them, furnished with an oily substance, to trim and keep their feathers in glossy order. Many persons, on seeing this natural prominency, think immediately that the bird has got the pip, when with a pin they hastily make an incision in the projection, and force out all that which is of service to the birds, and through this received error, many a fine bird has been killed.

If you should at any time perceive an extra bladder of matter forming round or close by the original spot, then you may prick that inflamed part with a fine needle, and put on it one drop of the oil of almonds or olive oil.

The true cause of this appearance is, sometimes your bird will be out of health, set bunchy, and twitch in his tail frequently; when that is the case, see if his motions be hard, and if so, give him some out-meal, and a sprig of water-cress for a few mornings to cool and open the body'; change his seed for a few days, and put one or two drops of the

spirits of nitre into his fresh water for two or

three mornings.

Some persons will recommend a feather or two to be pulled out of the tail, but we do not; only draw a tail feather or two in case of a fit, or dropping down apparently dead, as that will fetch blood and sometimes recover the bird.

EGG-BOUND.

The complaint of egg-bound proceeds from cold, and especially the coldness of the spring weather, which is so very uncertain in this country; therefore, it is best not to put your birds up too early, but to wait till the weather is settled a little; the last week of the March month is generally early enough to put them into the breeding cage. Cold weather likewise causes the birds to have soft eggs, that is, no hard shell when laid. Therefore, begin not too early, especially as a room without any fire is the best; give the bird a little moist sugar with the bread and egg, which will cause a slipperiness and openness for the egg.

Should the hen be very bad and scarcely able to move, or if she is down in a bunch at the bottom of the cage, take her gently out with a warm hand, and anoint the abdominal part with two or three drops of warm salad oil, or the oil of almonds. By this she will generally be relieved, and the egg will be found laid or dropped about the cage in the

course of a few hours, or, at the farthest, by

next morning.

With a maiden hen this frequently happens, and if the above means fail, the last resource is, to pour down her throat, through a reed or quill, one drop of castor oil.

MOULTING.

Moulting sometimes exhibits a diseased

type.

Birds bred up in the manner we have directed, in a good healthy air, as near as possible to a state of nature, moult off strong, clean, and without any assistance; but at times, even the best require attention. Cold is the greatest danger to which in this state they are exposed; therefore all draughts of air should be carefully guarded against.

In itself it cannot be prevented, and when it happens in due course of nature it should be encouraged rather than checked. Nature has, however, no objection to borrow at times the hand of man to assist her feathered offspring in throwing off their glossy coats.

The top and sides of the cage may be covered up with paper to keep the birds warm, and the cleaning of the cage may be omitted for two or three weeks. A little saffron in their water, a little nourishing bread, egg, and maw seed, will speedily clothe the birds in a plumage more beautiful than that in which they were.

The covering of the cage should not be

taken off at once, but gradually; it should then be cleaned thoroughly, and the birds fed as usual. Fresh water should be given them plentifully every day, and they should be put in the sun for an hour or two if the weather is fine, when they will be seen assisting nature by plucking off their feathers.

The first moult, which takes place when they are about three months old, is partial. The birds then throw off all their down and loose feathers, and produce the full blooming plumage. The moult of September is the

general time of moulting for old birds.

LOSS OF VOICE.

It sometimes happens that after moulting a male loses his voice; he must then be fed with the same paste as is prepared for young birds, adding some lettuce seed or maw seed.

CONSTIPATION.

The remedy for this is plenty of green food, as lettuce leaves, water-cresses, &c., not forgetting bread and milk.

ASTHMA, OR HARD BREATHING.

When arising from an oppressed stomach, the asthma generally yields to plantain and rape seed, moistened with water, as the sole food.

SNEEZING.

Sneezing, produced by an obstruction of the nostrils, is removed by passing a small quill up them to clear them.

EPILEPSY, OR FITS.

Epilepsy, which is common among many kinds of birds, may be produced in Canaries by particular causes, as great delicacy and timidity. Some birds are more nervous than others; and sudden noise or bustle near the cage will frighten one, while not the slightest effect is produced upon another. We should therefore avoid alarming them, either by catching them suddenly or violently, or by tormenting them in any way. If a bird has dropped down in a fit without any apparent cause, what we have found the most useful in this case is to plunge the sick bird now and then in very cold water, letting them fall suddenly into it, and cutting their claws, or at least one or two, short enough for the blood to run.

From bleeding giving so much relief, one would think this disease a kind of apoplexy, occasioned by want of exercise and too much food.

After the immersion in cold water, a drop of the spirits of nitre should be put into his water-glass for two or three mornings.

Sometimes a Canary will drop down by exhausting his strength, from singing in rivalry with another. In this case he should be recovered by the most gentle means, and the greatest good may be done by getting a small quantity of Canary wine in his bill.

THE YELLOW GALL.

The yellow gall in the head and eyes, arises from over heat; a cooling diet is therefore the only remedy. If the tumor has grown to the size of a hemp-seed, it must be cut off, and the wound be anointed with a little oil of almonds, or bathed with wine.

OVERGROWN CLAWS AND BEAK.

When the claws or beak want paring, sharp scissors must be used, and care taken to avoid drawing blood, lest the birds should be maimed. They often injure themselves when their claws are too long, and get hooked in the wires of the cage, and continue thus hanging. The females, in the same way, get entangled in their nests.

LICE, OR RED MITES.

The parasite insects by which these little prisoners are often tormented, are generally produced by slovenliness. They may be discovered, by their frequent plucking and feathering themselves in the day. Besides frequent bathing, the cages must be cleaned with much care and vigilance, in the manner

we have described when speaking of cages, and have plenty of dry sand strewed over the bottom. These lice, like bugs, retire during the day to cracks and crevices, which accounts for old wooden cages being often infested. To get rid of them, hollow sticks, or stalks of rushes are used, which must be examined and changed every day.

DROOPING.

It frequently happens, that after having tried every remedy pointed out by experience, the true disease cannot be ascertained, and notwithstanding various treatments, the bird continues drooping and sickly. We have ourselves found that pulverized charcoal, mixed with the bread and egg, as directed for feeding the young Canaries, has entirely restored to health and vigor, valuable birds which we had almost given up.

GENERAL REMARKS.

Those who keep many Canaries, ought always to have a cage termed an hospital; as in a large quantity of birds, some invalids will be generally found.

Separate them from the others, as they require different food, and to prevent contagion.

This hospital cage should be large, and covered with thick serge. If in summer, place the cage in the sun; if in winter, not far from the fire.

Sometimes in spring a hen falls ill, and in spite of all the remedies given to her, dies. This proceeds from warmth of constitution; hearing the cock sing, they incline to pair, and pine if kept separate.

When Canaries throw their seeds about the cage without eating them, it shows they want purging, which is easily done, as we

have already described.

When a Canary has broken a leg or wing, put him in a cage without perches, with soft hay at the bottom, putting also his food within his reach. This cage should be covered, that he may not be disturbed. Nature must be the surgeon, and will cure him in a few days.

When you want to send birds into the country, to any considerable distance, pursue the following method: Choose a proper time of the year; *i. e.*, let it not be in the height of summer, or depth of winter, but when the weather is temperate; if possible, the birds should be rested every third day.

They should be put in a wooden cage of a good width, but not too high; so that they may run about the bottom, but not fly.—Keep a thin covering over the front of the cage, so that they may have a little day light

to feed by and exercise themselves.

You must also put in their water pan a sponge; as when they are thirsty they peck at it, and it saves the water from spilling; by these means your canaries will not suffer

the least thirst during the journey; but by neglecting this precaution, many are fre-

quently lost.

It is rare for canaries which are kept for breeding to live longer than from seven to ten years; while others, if well used, may be preserved for eighteen or twenty years.

THE PURPLE FINCH, OR LINNET.

(Fringilla Cannabina.)

A NATIVE bird of considerable pretensions to musical skill; in truth, a delightful songster, very far superior to the canary. They winter in Pennsylvania, and about the first of May retire to the north to breed; they fly in vast flocks, and are taken in trap cages, and sold at high prices under the name of Linnets. They very soon become familiar, but sometimes refuse to sing in confinement.

The song of this beautiful finch is, indeed, much finer than that of the canary, the notes are remarkably clear and mellow, and the trilling sweet and various, particularly on their first arrival. At times the warble is scarcely audible, and appears at a distance; it then, by a fine crescendo, bursts into loudness, and falls into an ecstacy of ardent and overpowering expression; at such times the usual pauses of the song are forgotten, and like the varied lay of the nightingale, the ravishing performer, as if in serious emulation, seems to study every art to produce the effect of brilliant and well contrasted harmony. As he sits on the topmost boughs of some tall sapling or more lofty tree, surveying the wide landscape, his proud voice and elevated action seem to bid defiance to competition, and while thus earnestly engaged,

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he seems to fear no spectator, however near may be his approaches. The rapidity of his performance, and the prominent execution with which it is delivered, seem almost like the effort of a musical box, or fine toned, quietly moving, delicate strain of the organ.

Canary, hemp, millet, and sunflower seeds, may be feed for them, of the latter they are very fond. Juniper and cedar berries should be given them occasionally through the winter; salad and beet tops also, during the

summer.

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH, OR YELLOW BIRD.

(Fringilla Tristis.)

A beautiful and constant resident, dreading neither the severity of winter nor the heat of summer, always cheerful and light-hearted, it flits from field to field in company with its jocund companions; it seems a fit emblem of happiness when on the wing, as it moves in continued rises and falls, its notes of conversation are ever heard, and while sitting on some lowly thistle, or devoted lettuce stock, it converses occasionally with low liquid voice to its more humble and less noticed mate. No bird is more familiar, and but for its destruction of house and garden seeds, would be a universal favorite.

When trapped, they soon become familiar in the cage, and their music rivals the sonorous whistle of the Canary, and is scarcely surpassed by it. They at times gradually elevate and lower their notes in the most delightful manner; bursting in an instant into overpowering melody, then dying away in a fairy-like strain, until it seems lost in the distance, then reviving with redoubled strength, running at once into the loudest fife of the Canary. They are very hardy and will bear considerable cold. Every sunny day should see their cage hung out, as air and sun light are necessary to the health of this delightful bird; a saucer of water should be kept constantly in the cage, which should be well gravelled, as he is particularly fond of bathing. They are fond of rich and oily seeds, and should be reared on yellow canary, millet, and hemp, one and one-fourth of the latter, a little sunflower and lettuce seeds occasionally given them, would be quite an addition to their fare. They are very fond of the leaves of the garden beet, and salad, which should be occasionally fed to them, as well as apple. The male is of a brilliant chrome yellow, with the crown of the head, wings, and tail, glossy black, the two latter edged with white, the female is of a dark color, and may be readily distinguished.

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH.

(Fringilla Carduelis.)

This brilliant and favorite songster is a native of Europe, and of the same manners

and habits of the American goldfinch, or

vellow bird.

The same treatment will answer for this bird; it mates readily with the Canary, of which much has been said in the preceding pages, to which we refer the reader.

ABORDAVAT, OR AMANDAVA.

(Fringilla Amandava, LINN.)

This beautiful and minute songster, the smallest of all our cage birds, is brought to the United States from Java, Malacca, and other tropical countries of Asia; it is only four inches long, of which the tail measures one and one-third. In the male, the head and under part of the body, are of a fiery red, the upper part of a dark grey; but the feathers have a broad red edge, so that this color seems to prevail; the feathers of the back, sides of breast, large quill feathers, and both tail coverts, are terminated at the tip with shining white spots.

The female is one-third smaller than the

male, and less brilliant in plumage.

These birds are of a social disposition, and when a number are kept in one cage, they perch close against one another, on the same perch; and what is more singular, they never sing together, but one after another, the rest keeping silent to listen to the songster. The females do not sing. Their food consists principally of millet seed, and occasionally a

little bruised hemp, and maw-seed; they should be plentifully supplied with fresh water and gravel.

SKY LARK.

(Alauda Arvensis, LINN.)

This beautiful and celestial songster, a native of Europe, is sometimes introduced in a state of captivity into this country; it sings well when kept in cages, which should be at least eighteen inches long, nine inches wide, and fifteen inches high, the bottom should be well covered with gravel, or sand, for this scratching bird to be able to roll and dust itself conveniently, a piece of green sod should be constantly kept for them to stand upon, as they never perch like other birds. The top of the cage must be of linen, since, from its tendency to rise for flight, it would run the risk of wounding its head against a covering of wood, or iron wire, especially before it is well tamed.

Food.—Maw, or poppy seed, bruised hemp, crumb of bread, and plenty of greens, as lettuce, endive, cabbage, or water-cress, according to the season, must be added; a little lean meat and ants' eggs, are favorite delicacies, which make it gay and more inclined to sing. During moulting the following paste may be given: Grate a carrot fine, soak some bread in water, press the water out, and put the carrot and bread together

in an earthen pan, add two handfuls of barley, or wheat flour, and mix the whole well together; the paste should be made

fresh every morning.

This bird will not breed in confinement. In a wild state, their song is given as they rise almost perpendicularly in the air, until lost from sight in the blue vault above.

WHIDAH BIRD.

(Emberiza Paradisea, Linn.)

This beautiful and rare species comes from Angola, and other parts of Africa; and is particularly common in the kingdom of Whidah, or India in Guinea, and hence it takes its name.

This bird moults twice in the year. At the first, which takes place in November, the male loses its long tail for six months. The other takes place in the spring, but the tail feathers do not attain their full length till July.

These birds are very lively, and constantly in motion, always waving their long tails up and down, often arranging their feathers, and amusing themselves with bathing. Their feeble song, though somewhat melancholy, is however very agreeable. They should be fed on canary and millet seed, and some green food.

JAVA SPARROW.

(Loxia Orycivora.)

A tender and delicate bird, worth little to recommend it, except the beauty of its colors; a native of the East Indies, as its name imports. Its food should be wholly unhulled rice, or Canary seed, in a small portion, with a large quantity of brown gravel, to assist its digestion. It has very little pretensions to music, though we have heard one whistle delightfully, in our possession. They are readily kept by observing the above simple rules.

INDIGO BIRD.

(Fringilla Cyanea.)

A native of America of surpassing beauty, a little allied in habits to the preceding,—though in every way more familiar. Their song is lively, unique, and interesting, and given not only at early dawn, but during the intense heat of mid-day in summer, and again is frequently heard during a great part of the night, especially if it be moonlight. Its notes resemble those of the Canary, and it may be kept in confinement on precisely the same food as given to the adult birds of that species. The male of this species is a brilliant azure blue, with a reflection of green; the female of a dingy yellow and olive brown, rather inclined to purple. It is sometimes

called the Blue Linnet, though in every way a distinct species from the true American Linnet or Purple Finch, (Fringilla Purpurea.) During the spring season they may be given occasionally insects, and they are particularly fond of the leaves or tops of the common garden beet. We have frequently seen them at our Nursery Garden, feeding on the latter in company with the Yellow Bird or American Goldfinch. They are frequently sold in our markets, in the months of May and June. A very social and delightful songster.

PAINTED BUNTING, OR NONPAREIL.

(Fringilla Ciris.)

This brilliant and interesting bird, is known more fully in the Southern States, never visiting farther north than Carolina. It is usually styled by the French inhabitants of Louisiana, le Pape, and every where else as the *Nonpareil*, a name in every way worthy of so much beauty. They may be reared in confinement on the same seed as the Indigo Bird, with the exception of unhulled rice of which they are very fond. We would recommend it being placed in water for half an hour or so, and partially dried before given to them. Ripe figs may be given to them occasionally; they are very fond of them, picking from them the ripe seeds, which they seem to take considerable interest in devouring.

The song, which though not so loud and vigorous as the Indigo Finch, is still very sweet, running into delightful warble, and is continued all summer. They will breed in confinement, if plenty of room is allowed them, and might probably mate with the Canary, which would produce mules of unrivalled beauty. The male is of a vermilion red, with the head and back of the neck of a rich blue, back of a golden green, wings clouded red, and the tail greenish, sometimes brown.

They are very delicate, and will not bear

the slightest cold.

GENERAL REMARKS.

Any other of the Finch tribe may be fed on seeds of the same character, generally, as those mentioned in the preceding pages. The same treatment will answer for the whole order, though a little distinction should be made as to the habits of the species in a wild state. Cleanliness, as regards the cages, and a constant supply of fresh water and gravel daily, is essential to the health of these beautiful birds. Bird fanciers should take care that their servants do their humble dependants ample justice. Neglect them one day, and feed at different times on each day, and soon will the owner find a change in his favorite, who will pine away gradually, lose his spirits, and finally end his career by a lingering death.

THE MOCKING BIRD.

(Turdus Polyglottis, Audunon.)

This every where esteemed and beautiful Thrush, whose musical talents are so highly appreciated in this country and in Europe, is a native bird, unrivalled for grandeur and power of song by any other in the known world. He is found in his natural condition from the State of Pennsylvania to the Rocky Mountains; in fact, he is seen from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, as far south as the interior of Brazil. He is occasionally now, though rarely, seen in the vicinity of Philadelphia, whence he has been gradually driven by a constant pursuit, which arose from the great price constantly demanded and obtained for him from the fancier. In fact, from this cause, scarcely a square in any one of our large cities, has not at least one, and frequently as many as a dozen cages, suspended from the windows of gentlemen's mansions.

It would be unnecessary in our limited work to describe the appearance of this bird, which is more remarkable for plainness and intelligence, than for extraordinary beauty. In the cage as well as in the wood, his every motion is ease and gracefulness itself, combined with a lightness and rapidity of motion which is amusing to the spectator, from its resemblance to caprice, and an apparent coquettishness of demeanor.

Now with his head bent upon one side, and with an arch and shrewd expression lighting up his eye, he is scated almost motionless upon his perch, quietly gathering the sounds which arise to his elevated position from the street beneath. In an instant, he is changed, "and such a change!" With outspread wings and flirted tail, he flits from side to side and perch to perch, like an empassioned but earnest troubadour, pouring forth

his whole soul in song.

In a wild state, his notes, from the ten thousand opportunities constantly offered, are much finer than in a state of domestication. There, where the wild hymns of the forest choir are constantly ringing in his ears, he has ample scope for his imitative powers. The song which these produce is unsurpassed except by his native notes, which are replete with vigor, boldness, sweetness, energy, and constant inimitable variations. In the forest, like the leader of an orchestra, or some accomplished musician, he sits upon a lofty twig, with the whole feathered race around, pouring out their varied performances, as an accompaniment to his song; forming on the whole, one of the grandest overtures which the human mind is capable of appreciating. These wild notes of his own are noted for their expression and beauty, and consist of short sentences of two, or three, or four syllables, which are mingled with imitations, and given with such ardor as to fill the breast of the listener with admiration.

Appropriately named, bird of many voices! Thy carol of gladness touches at once the heart of statesman or peasant. The untutored Indian, clad in his pride of selfish stoicism, pauses in his pursuit, his ear drinks in thy melody, and he wonders at the musical powers the Great Spirit has given unto thee. Sweet songster! the nightingale of America! Yet far surpassing the Philomel of Europe: could he hear thy varied tones, he would feel his own inferiority, and shrink in silence from

thy presence.

But in the cage, to which he soon becomes accustomed, he is better known as a songster. Here, full as happy as in his woodland home, his intelligence and genius have ample scope; and he spreads, by their exertion, a feeling of joy and happiness around. He is unceasing in his song; cloudy or clear weather is the same to him; he is the Shakspeare of nature, and his genius never sleeps. Of himself he is all, breathing forth a concert of hundreds of grove and field, shaming the original into silence. At daylight, mid-day, and the live-long summer's night, his efforts demand applause. One hundred and fifty dollars we have known to be refused for a favorite bird, so docile as to come at a whistle, perch on his owner's hand and head, and while there to warble incessantly.

"Ten thousand warblers cheer the day, And one the live-long night,"

as expressed by the celebrated poet, Cow-

per, of the Nightingale, but equally as appropriate to the subject of our remarks. On a warm bright night in June, a wanderer in our streets might hear the shrill scream of the eagle bursting on his ear, the delicate warble of the spring-tide blue bird, the moan-like note of the turtle dove, followed by the cackling of the domestic hen, and the quarrelling of a dozen cats, seeming to vie with each other as to the quantity of noise. Now the mellow whistle of the cardinal, or red bird, another favorite, the scolding of the wren, the cry of the katy-did, the grunt of some maternal swine, anxiously perambulating the neighboring alley, in search of some of her juvenile porkers, some rusty tavern sign, with the shrill pipe of the canary; the school boy's whistle, and the cry of some forlorn puppy, wailing to the midnight air, succeed each other with such rapidity, that the listener pauses, wondering that such variety can proceed from so small an object. Now the shrill clarion of the cock is heard, while the servants, in hearing, awaken, at the too early approach of dawn; then the watchman's rattle creaks upon the ear, scaring the burglar from his prey, or the loafer into flight; a bar or two of some favorite air, with the cries of various other birds, once heard, never forgotten; a cloud passes over the moon, and our songster is as silent as the grave.

For the cage, young birds taken from the nest, are best adapted, since they are accus-

tomed to the sight of man from the first, and are never so wild as old birds trapped from the woods, though the latter are the best songsters. Few adult birds, when trapped, will survive confinement. Trapping old birds is a most cruel practice, and should be discountenanced for many reasons:—The most important, that thus causing the death of many old birds, gradually diminishes their number, and if persevered in, will effectually extinguish the species, as they never breed in confinement.

It would be far preferable to wait until the young could be taken from the nest, and allow the parent birds to go unmolested, thus

securing their orchestra-like progeny.

The young are generally sold in our streets at from two to five dollars each, the purchaser running the risk of the sex of the bird. This, however, can be obviated by

observing the following rule.

The young male mocking bird, must always be chosen by the breadth and purity of the white marks on their wing feathers. These, in the male, are spread over the whole nine primaries, or outer wing feathers, down to, and frequently a considerable distance below, what is termed their coverts, which are generally of a dusky white, tipped with pale grayish brown. This white mark extends regularly on both sides of the feathers, down to the place before mentioned, forming an almost regular curve.

In the female, this white is less distinct,

spreads over a less number of the feathers, and extends a much greater distance on the broad than on the narrow side of each. The wings, besides, are inclined to brown, which, in the male, are black.

The best food for the young, until able to take care of themselves, is raw meat, which shall be either beef, mutton, lamb, or veal, never pork, without any fat, and be chopped, or minced fine, and soaked in fresh, sweet milk. This is the most nutritious nourishment they could receive, as it approximates most closely to that which they would obtain from the parent birds, insects of various descriptions. Besides this, Indian meal, scalded and mixed to a not very stiff paste, with sweet milk, or water, is an excellent addition, and must be fed to them daily.

When the birds have arrived at a proper age, and can feed without assistance, the same food may be continued for a month, or six weeks, supplying them also, with all the different kinds of berries, as they alternately arrive in season. They must have cherries, strawberries, and whortle, or huckleberries, &c., during the summer time; in the autumn, those of the poke, alder, dogwood, and sourgum, all of which are readily found in the vicinity of the city; and during winter, those of the poke and red cedar, which are dried for the purpose. At this latter time, they may be fed with a few soaked currants, raisins, and slices of mellow fruits, such as apples, pears, and peaches. They will, likewise,

eat rice, boiled soft, in milk, and sweetened,

which is very nutritious.

They should also have insects of various kinds, as grasshoppers, and beetles, on every possible occasion. Spiders, and meal-worms, which last can be obtained at any granary, will immediately revive them, if given when

they are either drooping or sick.

Boiled egg, and bread, mixed in the same manner as for breeding canaries, and moistened with water, may be given in the stead of Indian meal, but it does not answer to mix boiled potatoes with the egg, as this mixture soon sours. Cedar, and other berries, must be dried in an oven, and put up in glass jars, as otherwise worms will get in them, and the bird will refuse to eat them.

The water and food ought to be placed in a situation where no dirt will get in; a good plan is to place a thin board across the cage, resting on the bars; also, put gravel on the

bottom of the cage.

In the cage, during the summer season, the mocking bird should be regularly supplied with water once a day, and if the weather be very warm, twice, in a deep and large vessel, as this bird requires a great deal of water when washing. In the latter instance, he should be kept in a situation where he will have plenty of air; but not in one where the scorching rays of the sun would fall for several hours together, upon his cage, as this would at once kill him in the summer time,

though in the winter, it would tend to the advancement of his health.

In the moulting season, however, this treatment must be changed; the bird must be taken in the house, and kept warm, quiet, and free from draughts of air, which at that critical period are always injurious. This fatal time for birds, occurs, with this species, about the commencement of August, and continues until the beginning of November.

During this season, your birds should be richly fed, and have as frequently as possible, spiders, which we before remarked, were an excellent revival to their systems, and also, grasshoppers. These are their principal food, with other insects, at that season, in a state of nature. They should, likewise, have mealworms, if they be severely affected.

The mocking bird is subject to few diseases, if properly attended to, but when sickly, it is necessary to treat him very kindly. Give him spiders daily, also mealworms, and disturb him as little as possible.

Baldness around the eyes, frequently extending over the whole head, seems to be the worst malady to which the bird is liable, and generally proves fatal. It may be known by the bird incessantly rubbing his eyes against the perches of his cage; we have, however, cured several valuable birds, by anointing the bald parts with flower of sulphur, moistened with water: it allays the itching, and in most instances will prevent

the spreading of the disease. Oil applied to the afflicted parts will make bad worse.

If your bird is taken with purging, let him have plenty of cedar berries, imported currants, without which he ought never to be, and grasshoppers; also spiders, and mealworms. Minced beef ought not to be given until the bird gets well, or any thing else that may have a tendency to purge him. Sick birds seem most fond of such food as agrees least well with them.

The mocking bird is subject to one disease which is incurable—it is blindness, which generally afflicts him after he has spent six or seven years in confinement. Thus shut out from light, he gradually pines away and

dies.

Berries of all kinds may be fed in season, but not too many pokeberries; a few of the latter may be dried for winter use, when they are soaked in water and given to the bird.

We have found it best to scald the beef and press out the blood with the hand before chopping it, although some persons give it as it comes from the market. The mocking bird is very fond of the eye of an oyster, and especially of the crabs found in them. Grasshoppers ought to be given them daily, when in season, and provision ought to be dried for the winter.

To dry Grasshoppers.—String them with a needle, and hang them in the sun against a wall, out of the reach of cats, which are very fond of them. As they will spoil if not dried, when the weather is bad hang them in the fire place, where a small fire of charcoal, or anthracite, may be made in a

furnace, which will soon dry them.

When sufficiently dry and crisp, put them up in glass jars, tying a piece of oiled paper over the mouth, to prevent moths from getting in and eating them. As you want to use them, take a few out and soak them in water before giving them to your bird. Some persons scald them, which method takes a great deal of the substance out. A more economical plan is, when dry, to pulverize them finely, in a mortar, and bottle up the powder for further use.

To feed this powder, wet it with cold

water, or mix it with the minced beef.

The most important point to be attended to in keeping a mocking bird, is regularity in the process of feeding. Your birds should be fed every morning at the same time, and not one day at one, and the next day at a different hour. Such neglect will render this bird dispirited and drooping, and he will lose his song, and finally, pine away and die, as if he believed that the neglect arose because his powers were no longer appreciated.

THE AMERICAN ROBIN.

(Turdus Migratorius.)

Another favorite, a native of America, equally esteemed for its richness of song,

and delicacy of taste. A sprightly and beautiful bird. The plumage of the male is of a dark ashy grey, the head and tail black, with the breast of a bright mahogany red, the throat barred with white and black, the eye of a piercing hazel, surrounded with

a ring of white.

Their treatment is precisely the same as the mocking bird, and in confinement their docility is surprising, coming in and out of the house, and following their owner, they may even be taught to repeat small pieces of music. Birds have been taught to whistle psalm tunes, as dull as old hundred, with methodistical precision, and in confinement they possess a talent for mimicry, and readily acquire the pronunciation of distinct words. Some have been known to whistle tunes with such accuracy, that even eyes and ears were found necessary to convince the listener that it was not a flute.

THE ENGLISH THRUSH.

(Turdus Musicus.)

Of the same tribe of birds, may be readily kept in confinement, on precisely the same treatment. A delightful songster.

THE BALTIMORE ORIOLE.

(Oriolus Baltimore.)

A native resident, possessing brilliant musical powers, with unrivalled splendor of

plumage, surpassed by none in richness and beauty. It makes its first appearance about Philadelphia when the leaves and buds are just springing forth, dotting all nature with their varied tints. They may be reared from the nest with the same treatment as the mocking bird, and will amply repay by their rich and varied song, all the care and attention bestowed upon them. Fruit of all kinds should be given them, with seeds, insects, &c., as suits your convenience. They will become very tame and docile, feeding from the fair hand that tends them. Care should be taken that frost never reaches them, as they are very tender, migrating to warm climates before the frost sets in. They thrive best in a large cage, where they have plenty of room, as they are one of the most active of our native birds. In feeding, from April to May, as much insect food should be given them as possible, as at that season it is their principal sustenance, and indeed, at all seasons would prove highly beneficial.

THE EAST INDIA ORIOLE.

(Oriolus Galbula).

Another beautiful species, closely resembling in colors the preceding, but possessed of louder and more varied musical powers, and more frequently found in confinement. The same treatment will answer as for the preceding.

THE CARDINAL GROSBEAK.

(Loxia Cardinalis.)

This magnificent bird, no less celebrated for the splendor of its colors than for the liquity and richness of its tones, is a constant resident of a great portion of this continent. Its colors are a brilliant scarlet, with a beautiful crest elevated and lowered at pleasure; it very rarely visits farther north than New York, though specimens have been obtained as far north as Massachusetts. In the middle states it is perfectly hardy, and in New Jersey abounds in the swampy sheltered thickets, even in the severest winters. As you travel farther south, they are found in still greater abundance. Their notes are lofty, liquid, and sublime, and in a wild state may be heard at the distance of a mile on a clear morning, running as it were from a resemblance to the fife, into the soft cadence of the flute. It possesses considerable powers of mimicking, and would readily acquire some of the notes of other birds if kept within hearing. Care should be taken to keep it out of the hearing of Canaries, as the latter will take most of the notes of the Red Bird, doing them considerable injury; in fact they scarcely ever recover. They are hardy, and may be kept in a room without fire for most part of the winter season. North of this they require stove heat; every opportunity should be taken in the winter season

to give them sun and air on clear warm days. They require to be fed on rough or unhulled rice, which is kept constantly on hand at our Horticultural Warehouse, and hemp seed occasionally; or wheat and millet may be fed to them. They are very fond of bathing, and should be kept constantly supplied with a saucer of water. Brown gravel is essential to their health, which may likewise be had at our establishment; a little cracked corn would occasionally be of service to them. Care should be taken in the fall season that the proportion of hemp seed be lessened, as all birds have a tendency to become gross at this time, and you run great risk of losing your birds. They are very long lived; there is a specimen in the Philadelphia Museum, which died at the age of twenty-one years.

THE SCARLET TANAGER, OR BLACK-WINGED SUM-MER RED BIRD.

(Tanagra Rubra.)

This is a magnificent summer resident of our country: breeding from Mississippi to Canada and Nova Scotia, they are sometimes obtained when young and kept in confinement. Their food should be seeds of all kinds sold at our Horticultural Warehouse, and in season whortle, or as they are more commonly styled, huckle berries, cherries, and other fruits, and insects, when they can

be obtained. Their voice, though sweet and rich, is rather monotonous, and has a striking similarity to the notes of a fellow-wanderer, the gaudy Baltimore Oriole, Goldfinch, or Golden Robin, as it is frequently called, and likewise to that brilliant and superb songster, the Rose Breasted Grosbeak. Its colors are the most brilliant scarlet, with wings and tail of a jet glossy black. The female is of a dingy green. The male in his autumnal moult becomes of the same color as his more humble mate, but re-obtains his splendid dress on the approach of spring.

THE REED BIRD, OR BOB-O'LINK.

(Icterus Agripennis.)

A resident of America, during the summer, and a favorite of all. The whistling ploughboy, wending to work his way over the meadow, stands with envy to hear his own music excelled. The liquidity and rapid execution of these delicate songsters will only be heard to be appreciated. In its native state, every meadow is enlivened with their presence, whole phrases are repeated in their song, which is poured out in the most delightful manner. The Bob-O'Link arrives in the middle States about the 10th May, and proceeds north to breed. They are readily taken in trap cages, and sing well in confinement, but are apt to die in November from fat, if too well fed; at that season, oats, buckwheat, or canary seed may be given to them, commencing with the first of September. At all other times, the same food indiscriminately as the Finch tribe. They should be abundantly supplied with water for bathing, an amusement of which they are particularly fond.

THE RED WING, OR SWAMP BLACKBIRD.

(Icterus Phæniceus.)

A fellow-wanderer with the preceding, and quite as noisy a songster; readily tamed, and may be taught to repeat words like a parrot, with careful instruction. Precisely the same treatment as the foregoing, with the exception of a little green corn in season. They become very amusing and docile in confinement.



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